



Local Roads & Streets Council

July 2000 - 2002
Biennial Report



LRSC

Local Roads & Streets Council
Advisory to the Wisconsin Secretary of Transportation

Partnering to improve the quality of Wisconsin's local roads and streets

***LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL
REPORT TO THE WISCONSIN SECRETARY
OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
July 2000-2002 Biennial Report***

Dear Mr. Secretary:

It is with great pleasure that I submit to you the biennial report of the Local Roads and Streets Council for the period July 2000-2002.

The Council was created in 1995 to be an advisor to the Secretary on issues impacting local units of government as they relate to the streets and highways within their jurisdiction. The creation of the Council produced a new partnership between the Department of Transportation and local government. The Council also provided a forum in which the Department of Transportation could present proposals at their early stages of development and receive feedback from local officials.

The success of the Council lies in the cooperative effort of Department of Transportation staff, representatives of regional and metropolitan planning organizations, and representatives of counties, towns, cities and villages.

The strength of the Council is its understanding that the streets and highways system is not made up of separate networks, but that all parts must function together as a cohesive system. It is the realization that a product manufactured in Racine, such as a can of Glade®, starts its journey on a local street. It then travels on a county or state highway to access the interstate highway. And upon reaching its destination in Green Bay or Superior, it travels across roads of all jurisdictions to reach the consumer's home. The sustaining power of the Council is the realization that whether a problem is isolated to a portion of the transportation system or impacts the entire network, it affects all of us.

The Local Roads and Streets Council is an example of the successful partnerships that can be developed between state and local governments. It also provides a blueprint for other state agencies to develop similar relationships with local government.

This report is a summary of the work of the Council to date and provides a vision of where we plan to go in the future.

This report is respectfully submitted this 30th day of December, 2002.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard M. Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Richard M. Jones, Chair
Local Roads and Streets Council

**2002
LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL
MEMBERSHIP**

Wisconsin Towns Association

- ◆ Bernard DeFlorian, Washington-La Crosse
- ◆ Mildred Beier, Beaver Dam-Dodge
- ◆ Norm Faber, Ithaca-Richland
- ◆ LaVerne Grunwald, Caledonia-Waupaca

League of Wisconsin Municipalities

- ◆ Gary Boden, Whitewater
- ◆ Bill Handlos, *Past Chair*, Manitowoc
- ◆ Dennis Melvin, West Bend
- ◆ David Waffle, Reedsburg

Wisconsin Counties Association

- ◆ Emmer Shields, Ashland County
- ◆ Phil Boehning, Clark County
- ◆ Tom Boguszewski, Rock County
- ◆ Dick Leffler, Florence County

**Regional Planning Commissions &
Metropolitan Planning Organizations**

- ◆ Don Kush, *Vice Chair*, West Central Wisconsin RPC
- ◆ Walt Raith, East Central Wisconsin RPC
- ◆ Ken Yunker, Southeast Wisconsin RPC

Wisconsin Alliance of Cities

- ◆ Richard Jones, *Chair*, Racine
- ◆ Bud Verjinsky, Wisconsin Rapids
- ◆ Carl Weber, Green Bay
- ◆ Jeff Polenske, Milwaukee

WisDOT Staff

- ◆ Mary Forlenza, *WisDOT Staff Chair*
- ◆ Rod Clark, *Director*, BTLR
- ◆ Scott Bush, *Unit Leader*, Local State Pgms.
- ◆ Bob Wagner, *Planning Supr.*, WI Rapids

Other Participants

- ◆ Phil Barnes, Federal Highway Association
- ◆ Phil Scherer, Transportation Development Association
- ◆ Don Walker, UW-Transportation Information Center

**2002
LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL
COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

Executive

- ◆ Rick Jones (WAC), *Chair & LRSC Chair*
- ◆ Tom Boguszewski, (WCA), Committee Chair
- ◆ Norm Faber (WTA) Representative
- ◆ Bill Handlos (LWM), *LRSC Past-Chair*
- ◆ Don Kush (RPC), *LRSC Vice-Chair & Committee Chair*
- ◆ Emmer Shields (WCA), Committee Chair
- ◆ Mary Forlenza, (WisDOT) Ex-Officer

Local Transportation Funding

- ◆ Tom Boguszewski (WCA), *Chair*
- ◆ Phil Boehning (WCA)
- ◆ Norm Faber (WTA)
- ◆ La Verne Grunwald (WTA)
- ◆ Norm Faber (WTA)
- ◆ Rick Jones (WAC)
- ◆ Dennis Melvin (LWM)
- ◆ Dave Novak (WCA)

Regulatory, Environmental & Legislative

- ◆ Emmer Shields (WCA), *Chair*
- ◆ Gary Boden (LWM)
- ◆ Tom Boguszewski (WCA)
- ◆ Norm Faber (WTA)
- ◆ Bill Handlos (LWM)
- ◆ Jeff Mantes (WAC)
- ◆ Dave Waffle (LWM)

Education & Communication

- ◆ Don Kush (RPC), *Chair*
- ◆ Mildred Beier (WTA)
- ◆ Tom Boguszewski (WCA)
- ◆ Norm Faber (WTA)
- ◆ Bill Handlos (LWM)
- ◆ Jeff Mantes (WAC)
- ◆ Ann Schell (RPC)
- ◆ Phil Scherer, Transportation Development Association (TDA)
- ◆ Emmer Shields (WCA)
- ◆ Don Walker, UW-Transportation Information Center

LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL OVERVIEW

Wisconsin's 112,000 roadway network consists of state, county, town, village and city roadways utilized by citizens to go to work, secure goods and services, and for entertainment and recreation. Wisconsin's economy is dependent upon a quality roadway system which is both properly maintained and cost effective. Each part of the roadway network plays a vital role and must function effectively for the whole system to work well. The goal of the Local Roads and Streets Council (LRSC) is to address issues and make recommendations that will promote the continued existence of a high quality, cost-effective system of local roads that serves the needs of Wisconsin's citizens.

In creating the LRSC in 1995, the Department of Transportation (WisDOT) Secretary asked the Council to concentrate on four main areas: (1) enhancement and facilitation of communication among various state associations and the Wisconsin Department of Transportation; (2) investigation into the impact of federal legislation on state policies; (3) review of policies which affect local roads and streets, with special emphasis on cost containment; and (4) evaluation of the needs and methods for collecting local network data and development of policy recommendations based on that data. The LRSC continues to focus on this charge through thoughtful review of legislative and policy ideas, through analysis of the state and federal project development funding processes, and through the creation of the state's first fully integrated local roads database.

The LRSC is proud to contribute to increased awareness of transportation issues and is committed to improving the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of transportation improvement programs.

LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL ORGANIZATION

The Local Roads and Streets Council is comprised of representatives from all levels of local government, including towns, villages, cities, counties, regional planning commissions and metropolitan planning organizations, along with WisDOT. This representative cross-section of local transportation stakeholders allows for input from a wide range of view points and perspectives, which is an asset in developing policy and direction for the LRSC. In order to maximize input from each of these stakeholders, as well as ensure a smooth and efficient workflow, LRSC members divide the workload among four main topics. These include:

◆ Executive Committee

◆ Local Transportation Funding Committee
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◆ Regulatory, Environmental and Legislative Committee

◆ Education and Communication Committee

The membership of each committee reflects a cross-section of the LRSC as a whole. Each committee is comprised of at least one member from various local government associations or groups (e.g. one member from the Wisconsin Towns Association, one representing regional planning agencies, etc.). In addition, the committee membership sometimes expands beyond Council members to include outside stakeholders or non-Council local government representatives with special skills or expertise that can contribute to the committee's efforts.

As the LRSC has matured and the issues it addressed became more complex, the group formed the Executive Committee in October, 2000. The leadership group is dedicated to providing focused commitment, insight, and action on key topics. The Executive Committee has not replaced the full Council actions – rather, this group moves quickly on timely issues, which are then brought before the full LRSC. In addition, the Executive Committee meets with the WisDOT Secretary's Office annually, and meets quarterly with WisDOT leadership on issues of mutual interest. Executive Committee membership includes the LRSC chair, vice-chair, past chair, committee chairs, and WisDOT's staff chair to the Council.

The goals of the Executive Committee include:

- Provide leadership to the LRSC
- Prioritize and focus Council efforts
- Ensure a consistent message across Council activities
- Serve as a focal point for WisDOT interaction.

Priorities of the Executive Committee during the biennium included:

- Successful implementation of WISLR
- Active participation in developing local consensus around future funding sources for transportation
- Cooperation with WisDOT business areas that have an impact on local communities
- Expanded awareness of the LRSC and its activities.

The remainder of this report examines the accomplishments of the LRSC's other committees and the changes that have occurred during the period July 2000-July 2002.

LOCAL ROADS AND STREETS COUNCIL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Accomplishment: Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR)

The concept of a local road database began in 1995 with the birth of the Local Roads and Streets Council and the realization that an evaluation of local road funding could not be done without additional information beyond that provided by the existing local road inventory system. It was understood that without a gauge of the condition of each pavement segment and a historical perspective of that condition, there was no way to determine if a funding mechanism was truly performing its intended function. Creation of a database including quality measurements of the local roads and streets inventory was a prerequisite for any thorough examination of the local road network and the impact of any funding program.

Therefore, in 1996 the LRSC recommended to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) that the existing WisDOT database should provide the foundation for a new system. This was followed by a 1998 recommendation that all local units of government inspect pavements under their jurisdiction, establish a pavement rating for each segment, and submit this data to WisDOT for inclusion in a statewide local road database.

Based upon this recommendation, the Legislature enacted State Statute 86.302(2) that requires all local governments to assess the physical condition of each roadway and to submit this data to WisDOT every two years. The first submittal of pavement ratings was due by December 15, 2001 and the Council is very pleased to report that 99.5% of all local governments submitted this data. This phenomenal response to a self imposed, unfunded state mandate is a direct result of the efforts and cooperation of many groups including the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, towns, villages, cities, counties, metropolitan and regional planning organizations, and the UW Transportation Information Center. From WisDOT's development of the WISLR database, to the Transportation Information Center's upgrades to Paserware software, to the efforts of countless local officials and staffs of metropolitan and regional planning organizations who helped train local officials in charge of the street system, everyone in the transportation community should be proud of the *esprit de corps* which has led to the creation of a road database which will be the envy of every state in the country.

WisDOT is inputting the submitted data into WISLR. Local governments will be able to access their local road data and eventually be able to edit their data via the Internet.

Accomplishment: Secretary's Committee on Local Program Streamlining

This working committee, consisting of state and federal DOT officials, local government representatives, and representatives from the construction industry and consulting engineering groups, was created in 1999 in response to suggestions contained in the *Report of the Delivery Cost Study Group*, a workgroup set up by the Local Roads and Streets Council. The charge of the Secretary's Committee on Local Program Streamlining (SCOLPS) was to evaluate the issues and suggestions raised by the delivery cost report and to recommend specific policy and procedural changes that could reduce the cost and decrease the time to develop and construct local projects.

Working from a list of more than 70 items contained in the *Report of the Delivery Cost Study Group*, SCOLPS has met at least quarterly since late 1999. To date, more than 60 of the items have been addressed and WisDOT has already adopted a number of these changes. Two of the most significant changes are:

- A pilot "fast-track" process for plan submittal prior to project letting, which is now in its second year; and
- A WisDOT Division of Transportation Districts management team recommendation to implement a consistent statewide level of service and staffing standard in all WisDOT districts to assist in local project development and delivery.

Several items have been examined and found to be not feasible at the present time, such as eliminating the Governor's approval of contracts and allowing local governments to design and let federal aid projects using local processes and procedures.

Work is still in progress on a number of important issues raised in the *Report of the Delivery Cost Study Group*. At the September 11, 2002 meeting, SCOLPS received an update on three important efforts:

- A proposal to establish better “pre-scoping” of local highway and bridge projects by local and state officials prior to submittal of local project funding requests. This will reduce the amount of project cost increases and schedule delays on local projects, and help local governments make more informed decisions about which projects to submit for funding.
- Work by the LRSC Regulatory, Environmental and Legislative (REAL) Committee, in conjunction with WisDOT and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, to look for ways to streamline the environmental review process by more quickly identifying projects for which in-depth review is appropriate.
- The possibility of including local projects along with state projects in efforts to improve coordination with utilities on highway and street construction.

The committee scheduled meetings in December 2002 and March 2003 to complete work on all of the issues. Committee members indicated in discussion that they anticipate that the group’s final report will contain a recommendation to the WisDOT Secretary that some sort of permanent group be established to provide a forum where the same parties can continue to talk about local highway program issues.

LOCAL TRANSPORTATION FUNDING COMMITTEE

(Formerly the General Transportation Aids Committee)

The name of this committee was changed to better reflect a new, broader focus of the group.

In early 2001, then WisDOT Secretary Mulcahy addressed the Executive Committee and spoke of the need to develop a consensus approach for expanding the revenue base for the Transportation Fund. He specifically cited the needs that have been identified in reports by the Legislative Audit Bureau (LAB) in the mid 1990’s, and more recently in the *WisDOT State Highway Plan*. It has been estimated that an additional \$250 million (1999 dollars) will be required annually over the next 20 years to meet the rehabilitation needs on the southeastern Wisconsin transportation system. This does not account for additional emerging needs on the state highway system or the local road and street network over the same period.

Former Secretary Mulcahy requested that the LRSC put forth an effort to develop an understanding of the issues related to Wisconsin’s transportation funding options. Included in this effort should be an understanding of the methods already being discussed as a means of broadening Wisconsin’s narrow transportation funding base, including the *May 1997 Final Report of the Transportation Finance Study Committee*. The Secretary asked that the LRSC develop thoughts on this process for serious discussions.

Accomplishment: Review of Options to Broaden Wisconsin's Transportation Funding Base

The LRSC Local Transportation Funding Committee reviewed the recommendations of the *May 1997 Final Report of the Transportation Finance Study Committee*. In that review, it was noted that many of the short-term recommendations have been implemented such as:

- Increase vehicle registration fees – personal motor vehicles
- Modify the current motor vehicle fuel indexing formula – remove consumption factor
- Increase the current motor vehicle fuel tax
- Enact legislation to phase out other agency program funding from the transportation fund

The committee also reviewed the recommendations of the *Governor's Blue-Ribbon Commission on State-Local Partnership for the 21st Century* (Kettl Commission). While the emphasis of the report is the state-local government relationship, there were several principles set forth by the Commission that deserve mention. The Kettl Commission felt state and local governments should be dedicated to “economic growth” and putting “citizens at the center.” The committee believes that both of these principles will be jeopardized if adequate funding for transportation purposes is not forthcoming. Clearly transportation is a major catalyst for economic growth and a major component of economic health.

At present, the needs of the southeastern Wisconsin transportation system overshadow the needs of the remainder of the system. However, we cannot allow this to reduce our commitment to citizens statewide or to reduce resources in other sectors of transportation. As local government officials we subscribe to the concept that we have one transportation system and whether the needs are within the state's jurisdiction or local jurisdiction, adequate resources must be made available. If, as the Kettl Commission proposed, every citizen deserves a basic level of service, then state and local officials must work together to make sure those services are delivered.

Accomplishment: Statements of Principle & Specific Recommendations

The LRSC Local Transportation Funding Committee supports creating revenue mechanisms that reflect the idea of a single statewide transportation network, across jurisdictions and modal systems. These mechanisms should build upon the Kettl Commission's positive findings about how transportation is funded.

Two more principles put forth by the Kettl Commission were “Performance Driven Government” and “Maximum Local Flexibility in Pursuing Statewide Goals.” The committee believes that funding mechanisms should reflect these attributes. Statewide goals should be emphasized and therefore, a statewide approach to transportation funding and transportation system performance should be taken. While this report deals primarily with transportation financing, the committee plans to continue its work in examining transportation funding mechanisms for the local road and street network, including initiatives to improve performance and implement best management practices.

The Committee also adopted statements of principle to be used when evaluating alternative transportation revenue sources for Wisconsin as presented in the *May 1997 Final Report of the*

Transportation Finance Study Committee. The committee's specific recommendations are as follows:

The committee believes that the strength of the economy of the state of Wisconsin is dependent upon having a modern, safe, and efficient multi-modal transportation system, and that those segments of the economy that benefit directly from this system should contribute to the support of the system. The committee recommends the development of a transportation funding enhancement strategy that relies on an array of sources including enhancement of existing sources as well as development of new revenue streams.

It is essential that expanded revenue sources are sufficient to meet the needs of all elements of Wisconsin's multi-modal transportation network and its stakeholders.

The committee supports:

- *Maintaining a flat vehicle registration fee system. Registration fees should be increased and adjusted periodically to preserve buying power. A \$10 increase would generate an estimated \$25 million annually.*
- *Implementing of a "new vehicle" title fee based on 1% of the vehicle's purchase price. This would generate approximately \$90 million annually.*
- *Restoring the 3¢/gallon fee currently used to fund the goals of PECFA into the Transportation Fund beginning July 1, 2003. This would generate approximately \$99 million annually. Current statute ties the revenue from the Petroleum Inspection Fee to the repayment of bonds issued to cover the shortfall of the PECFA program.*
- *Transferring the state sales tax on new and used motor vehicle sales from the General Purpose Fund into the Transportation Fund to be phased in over the next 4 years. When fully implemented this would generate approximately \$445 million annually.*
- *Creating an interstate highway usage fee, to be imposed on vehicles entering the state of Wisconsin via the Interstate Highway System. We suggest that this fee be assessed at the rate of \$1.00 per auto, and \$3.00 per commercial vehicle. This would generate an estimated \$45 million annually.*
 - *Monthly passes could be offered to accommodate daily commuters. This would reduce the impact on the local area commuting public.*
 - *In recognition of the public/private partnerships for promoting Wisconsin's tourism, discount coupons to various destinations and attractions could be distributed.*
- *Enacting a statewide hotel/motel room tax of 2% with revenues to be placed into the Transportation Fund. It is estimated this would generate \$25 million annually.*

Due to the time constraints within which this work progressed, the Local Transportation Funding Committee did not address allocation of existing, enhanced or new revenue sources that have been recommended. However, we stand ready to address the issue as the Secretary of Transportation deems appropriate.

REGULATORY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE (REAL)

The mission of the REAL Committee is to analyze laws, statutes, administrative rules and governmental policies to determine how they affect local transportation services. The REAL Committee's role includes identifying regulatory problems and recommending alternatives or improvements to resolve those problems. A priority for REAL is to be proactive, examining regulation and policy changes during their development or early stages of introduction, engaging those involved, and providing analysis to WisDOT on the ramifications of regulatory proposals or policies effecting local roads and streets.

Since the REAL Committee's creation in 2000, a number of diverse issues have been studied and addressed. As a relatively new committee, the group has spent a considerable time looking at approaches for fulfilling its mission, developing resources to tap, and establishing priorities for work to undertake. Among the varied topics the group has been dealing with are environmental streamlining, water resource regulatory issues (wetlands, streams, permits), tracking of administrative rules, non-point pollution rules, overweight trucks, environmental justice, and community sensitive design.

Accomplishment: Identification of Issues and Setting of Priorities

- ***Federal Reauthorization*** – The intense process of developing a federal transportation budget for the coming years has taken center stage. The REAL Committee has taken an active role in monitoring the federal process and making recommendations to WISDOT on those aspects of the federal program affecting local roads and streets including the Surface Transportation Program, Local Bridge Program, local transportation planning requirements and new programs such as the Rural Road Safety Program.
- ***Environmental Regulatory Streamlining*** – At the forefront of REAL Committee efforts is improvement of the environmental review process for local transportation projects. Beyond the monitoring and study of environmental regulations and the process involved, the Committee has taken the lead to develop an environmental conference at which local government representatives, WisDOT, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources can engage in a dialogue and initiate an effort to work in a more collaborative way to improve the delivery of transportation projects.
- ***Conflicts in the Use of Rights-of-Way*** – Local governments are faced with ever increasing pressure to share road and street rights-of-way with public and quasi-public agencies. The REAL Committee has begun to examine the management of rights-of-way by local governments and will begin an effort to clarify local governments authority and responsibilities and identify best management practices.
- ***Overweight Trucks and Weight Restrictions*** – Since 1970; there has been a 400 to 500% increase in truck loading and truck traffic, a trend that is expected to continue for the foreseeable future. Local roads and streets are being subjected to ever increasing truck loadings. Truck weights are also increasing due to the expansion of overweight permit categories and because of the limited effectiveness of weight enforcement. Trucks are the primary factor affecting local road and street longevity.

The issue of truck weights and truck configurations, load postings and weight restriction enforcement are all critical issues for local governments. The REAL Committee will be making a thorough examination of these topics in an effort to develop recommendations on the role of local and state governments in addressing the challenge of balancing the economic importance of commerce with the importance of local infrastructure preservation.

EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE

Many in the transportation community have a poor habit of “preaching to the choir.” Many believe that once we have convinced ourselves of the right thing to do, elected officials and population as a whole will follow. However, due to a variety of factors including competing interest groups and issues, and a populace which does not trust its elected government and is loathe to any tax increases, we need to work harder than ever before to communicate with the public and our elected officials about the needs of our street and highway transportation system.

We must effectively communicate the benefits of our state roadway system and the economic impacts of a declining system. We must realize that perception is often more important than reality. Take for example the public’s perception of the state’s portion of the gas tax, which will make future increases very difficult to implement. The general public simply focuses on the fact that Wisconsin’s state gasoline tax is one of the highest in the country. It simply does not understand that this is due to the very limited means in which we have chosen to fund our system. The fact that our spending on the transportation system is about average compared to the rest of the country is simply lost in the noise that surrounds these issues.

Therefore, the work of the Education and Communication Committee is extremely important by providing information to not only the transportation community, but to elected officials and the general public so that informed decisions can be made.

Accomplishment: Development & Implementation of Outreach Tools to Inform, Educate & Assist Local Governments & Others

During the past two years the Committee has focused its efforts on the development of a quarterly newsletter and a Web site. The first quarterly newsletter was published in April of 2001. Topics during the biennium have included pavement management, the PASER pavement rating system, and the Wisconsin Information System for Local Roads (WISLR). The newsletter is distributed to over 1,500 subscribers including the state legislature, towns, villages, cities, counties, transportation planners, contractors, consultants and the general public. A brochure highlighting the council’s charge, membership and accomplishments was also developed in 2001. The brochure provides background and orientation information to interested people.

The LRSC Web site was launched in 2002 as part of the WisDOT Internet and Intranet sites. The site contains a listing of members, prior newsletters, the brochure, reports, meeting notices and meeting minutes. The address for the LRSC homepage is:

<http://www.dot.wisconsin.gov/localgov/lrsc/index.htm>

LRSC CHAIR'S FINAL THOUGHTS

As we look back over the past two years, it is difficult to contain the pride that we feel due to local government's response to the state of Wisconsin's requirement to rate the condition of all local pavements. Prior to the mandated December 15, 2001 deadline for submitting pavement data, we believed that a 70% response rate by local governments would be the basis for judging our success. It is extremely gratifying to learn that 99.5% of all towns, villages, cities and counties complied with the pavement data requirement. This overwhelming response is the direct result of the cooperative efforts between the LRSC, WisDOT, UW-Transportation Information Center, regional planning commissions, metropolitan planning organizations and local government. This effort has not been duplicated in any other state and is a major step forward in addressing the issue of need of the local street system.

Although the WISLR program has been a success story, we cannot rest on our laurels. Therefore, we set the following priorities for 2002:

1. Regulatory streamlining
2. Best management practices
3. Conflicting uses within public rights-of-way
4. Project delivery streamlining
5. The future of WISLR
6. Overweight vehicles
7. Federal reauthorization as it may impact local government
8. The state budget crisis
9. The Council's relationship to the new WisDOT Secretary

In order to better address these priorities, we reorganized the Council's structure by creating a new committee. The new group, the Infrastructure Management Committee, will focus on future expansions to WISLR and the development of best management practices for the transportation industry.

The revised committee structure will allow the Council to better address the changing priorities facing local transportation officials. The LRSC membership is committed to continuing its efforts to improve the efficiency and cost effectiveness of providing a local transportation system to the citizens of our state.

As we look to the future, there are four areas that I believe we must focus on. First, we must not let our success with WISLR stagnate. We must determine how we can, at least in general terms, develop an estimate of need for our local transportation system. This will require consensus on the average level of service needed for each street classification within towns, villages, cities and counties. By applying pavement management techniques we will be able to discuss needs from a factual basis.

Secondly, we must strive to better educate our citizens and elected officials regarding funding of the transportation system. Since perception is reality, we have a difficult task to overcome the focus on the fact that we have a high state gas tax. We must educate the populace that the only reason we have a high state gas tax is that we have such a narrow base for funding our roadway

network. And the true facts are that spending on our transportation system is about average as compared with the rest of the country.

Thirdly, we must solve the financing problem. Either we must find new funding mechanisms or we must be willing to increase the level of funding from our existing revenue sources to meet the transportation needs not only in southeast Wisconsin, but throughout the rest of the state. Transportation is too vital to the health of our economy to allow it to slide into disrepair.

Finally, we must strive to deliver projects in a more timely and cost efficient manner. There are simply too many burdensome regulations that are required regardless of the project size or impact on our environment. We must develop a methodology to determine which projects may potentially negatively impact our world and then expend our resources on these projects. Too often, common sense does not prevail and both resources and time are needlessly lost.

Certainly these are not simple problems that we are facing, however, I am confident that through WisDOT, the various stakeholders and the Local Roads and Streets Council, that solutions to these problems are possible.